the highest authority in the Ministry; if so, what are the facts thereof; and

(b) whether it has also been reported that Shri Kini was trying to *outclass his boss, by joining office on* the last day of his retirement to get extension and promotion; if so, what are the facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) Government has seen the news-item which appeared in the Indian Post dated 20-12-1988 about Shri Kini, ex-Executive Director Union Bank of India. Shri Kini was on earned leave for a period of 60 days with effect from 21-12-1988. He has since demitted office on 20-2-1989 at the expiry of his tenure as Executive Director of Union Bank of India.

Appeal Cases pending against Indian Express Newspapers (Bombay) Pvt. Ltd.

2442. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Commissioner of Income-tax (Appeals) has been requested to dispose of all pending appeals as early as possible in connection with the tax dues of Indian Express Newspapers (Bombay) Private Limited;

(b) if so, whether the appeals have been disposed of by now and the balance demand of Rs. 26.82,164 has since been collected; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor and what further action is proposed to be taken to recover the amount expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Commissioner of Income-tax (Appeals) has been requested to dispose of appeals for assessment year 1981-82 and 1984-85 as early as possible.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Appeal for assessment year 1984-85 was fixed for hearing on 7.12.88, but the company sought adjournment. Hearing of both the appeals was fixed for 7.3.89 but could not be disposed of. These appeals have now been fixed for 28.3.89. As the demands have been disputed in appeals, recovery is not being enforced.

Foreign Funds of Shri Ramkrishna Hegde and other Political Leaders

2443. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:

SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news reports published in the Times of India and Indian Express and other newspapers on the 27th January, 1989 regarding allegation made by responsible VIPs against Shri Ramkrishna Hegde and 16 others for stacking funds abroad;

(b) whether the Ministry has in its own files a copy of the letter addressed in 1988 to Mr. Michael J. Hershman to investigate into the matter; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) Reports regarding alleged foreign accounts of certain opposition leaders have been brought to the Government's notice. The matter is engaging the attention of concerned Government agencies.